

# **Master Cellular Voice and Data Service and Equipment Agreement with Cellular South: Frequently Asked Questions**

## ***Contract Overview and Administration***

### **Why did ITS establish a Cellular Master Agreement?**

ITS' enabling legislation requires that ITS:

- Establish and coordinate through either state ownership or commercial leasing, all telecommunications systems and services affecting the management and operations of the state; and
- Act as the sole centralized customer for the acquisition, billing and record keeping of all telecommunications systems or services provided to state agencies whether obtained through lease or purchase;

Prior to the passage of Senate Bill 2514, 2005 Regular Session, and Senate Bill 2398, 2006 Regular Session, ITS fulfilled this statutory mandate as it applied to cellular services and products by compiling and publishing Cellular Express Products Lists to be used by state agencies and other public entities in these acquisitions.

Senate Bill 2514, now codified in Mississippi Code § 25-53-171, established the Mississippi Wireless Communication Commission (WCC) and tasked the Commission, in conjunction with ITS, with the responsibility for approving all wireless communication purchases within the state and for setting forth rules and regulations governing these purchases. Senate Bill 2398, Section 9, now codified in Mississippi Code § 25-53-191, further regulates the acquisition and use of wireless communication devices by state employees. This statute directs ITS, in conjunction with the WCC, to develop a list of approved vendors for the procurement of wireless communication devices and services.

In Fiscal Year 2007, ITS, on behalf of the WCC, issued RFP 3489 for cellular products and services. A multi-agency evaluation committee evaluated the proposals. In January 2007, the WCC and the ITS Board approved an award to Cellular South as the lowest and best vendor responding to the RFP. A Cellular Master Agreement was negotiated and executed between the State of Mississippi and Cellular South. The Master Agreement contains favorable pricing and other benefits and is available for use by any public entity in the state.

### **Who can use the Cellular Master Agreement executed with Cellular South?**

Any public entity in the state of Mississippi may purchase the cellular services and products included in the Master Agreement. All terms and conditions, products, services, and pricing included in the Master Agreement are available to state agencies, IHLs, community colleges, K-12 schools, local governments, and other governing authorities. The Master Agreement is E-Rate eligible and meets all requirements of ITS and public purchasing statutes.

**Do I have to change to Cellular South?**

The Master Cellular Agreement with Cellular South has been executed in fulfillment of the statutory requirements of Mississippi Code Section 25-53-191 (4). ITS and the Mississippi Wireless Communication Commission (WCC) approved a single award for RFP 3489 for statewide cellular services to Cellular South, with exceptions being made only in documented instances in which the awarded vendor cannot provide usable coverage or required functionality.

State agencies and Institutions of Higher Learning cannot buy a cellular communication device or service (voice or data) from any other vendor without prior written approval from ITS and the WCC for documented coverage or functional exceptions.

K-12 Schools and local governing authorities are not included in the requirements of Mississippi Code Section 25-53-191 (4) and are not required to purchase from the Master Agreement. However, they may participate in the contract and may find it economically advantageous to participate. In addition, if all public bodies use the contract, Cellular South will have more incentive to build its infrastructure, benefiting not only government but all citizens of Mississippi.

**Does Cellular South have an account team for the State of Mississippi?**

Yes, Cellular South has an account team that is dedicated to the State of Mississippi. Support for the account includes those individuals listed below.

Gov't Account Group	<a href="mailto:assistforbusiness@cellularsouth.com">assistforbusiness@cellularsouth.com</a>	1-877-276-8842
Jamie Vega	<a href="mailto:jlvega@cellularsouth.com">jlvega@cellularsouth.com</a>	601-624-1204
Janice Fitzgerald	<a href="mailto:jfitzgerald@cellularsouth.com">jfitzgerald@cellularsouth.com</a>	601-664-8880
Terrell Knight	<a href="mailto:tknight@cellularsouth.com">tknight@cellularsouth.com</a>	601-573-3333

**Where are the Cellular South corporate offices located?**

Cellular South is a Mississippi based company with headquarters in Ridgeland. The headquarters building is located at 1018 Highland Colony Parkway, Ridgeland, Mississippi.

**What are the advantages of the contract with the State of Mississippi?**

The contract offers State agencies and entities Flat Rate, Pooled and Unlimited plans at pricing that is tailored to meet specific agency needs. Your State Cellular South Account Team will work with you to determine the plan or plans that best serve the needs of your agency.

Price redetermination will occur every 18 months during this contract. Moving all of the State's cellular traffic to a single wireless carrier will leverage the State's ability to negotiate deeper discounts over time. If everyone uses the contract, Cellular South will have more incentive to build out its infrastructure, benefiting not only government but all citizens of Mississippi.

**How do I find out about plans and pricing?**

The pricing exhibit to the Cellular Master Agreement is available on the ITS website.

Cellular South has developed a web site for State government use at <https://prodsms.cellularsouth.com/msgov/>. You can also access this site from the “Cellular Products and Services” link on the Wireless Communications page of the ITS website.

The Cellular South state government site contains detailed information, including pricing, for all plans and equipment available under the Cellular Master Agreement. Additionally, users designated by their agency, institution, or governing authority as account managers will be able to place orders and download monthly billing. For account management access, call Cellular South Government Accounts Groups at 877-CSOUTH2 (877-276-8842) or send an email to [assistforbusiness@cellularsouth.com](mailto:assistforbusiness@cellularsouth.com). You may contact your State Cellular South Account Team regarding any questions or issues regarding cellular service. Cellular South has an account team that is dedicated to the State of Mississippi. Support for the account includes those individuals listed below.

Gov't Account Group	<a href="mailto:assistforbusiness@cellularsouth.com">assistforbusiness@cellularsouth.com</a>	1-877-276-8842
Jamie Vega	<a href="mailto:jivega@cellularsouth.com">jivega@cellularsouth.com</a>	601-624-1204
Janice Fitzgerald	<a href="mailto:jfitzgerald@cellularsouth.com">jfitzgerald@cellularsouth.com</a>	601-664-8880
Terrell Knight	<a href="mailto:tknight@cellularsouth.com">tknight@cellularsouth.com</a>	601-573-3333

## ***Cellular Master Agreement Purchasing Guidelines***

### **Do I need additional approval from ITS or the WCC to purchase products and services from the Cellular Master Agreement?**

No. The Cellular Master Agreement meets all statutory requirements for competitive procurements. Both ITS and the WCC have approved state agencies, institutions, and governing authorities to make purchase from this instrument without additional oversight by either body and without any dollar limit.

### **As a state agency, how do I create a purchase order in the Statewide Automated Accounting System (SAAS)?**

Agencies on SAAS should make purchases from the Cellular Master Agreement in much the same way items are purchased from ITS Express Products Lists. Create a “PD” document. Enter the Cellular Master Agreement in the blanket number (contract number) field on the header of the PD document as “Cell 3489.” Use object code “61939” for all cellular voice and data **services**. Use object code “63435” for the purchase of all cellular voice and data **devices**.

### **Whom can I contact at ITS if I have questions about the master agreement?**

Contact Paula Conn at 601-359-4411 or via email at [paula.conn@its.ms.gov](mailto:paula.conn@its.ms.gov). If you cannot reach Paula, call the ITS Procurement Help Desk at 601-576-HELP (4357).

### **What if Cellular South does not have coverage in my area or does not have a feature that I need?**

Requests for exceptions to the statewide cellular contract should be submitted to ITS using the “[Request for Exception to Master Cellular Agreement](#)” form on the ITS website. Requests will be considered on a unit-by-unit basis for coverage issues and on a case-by-case basis for

functionality not available through the statewide contract. Agencies should carefully complete the form, supplying all requested documentation. All exceptions above \$75,000 total cost per fiscal year require approval by the WCC Procurement Review Committee and/or the full WCC. See the [WCC](#) website for additional information on WCC approval requirements.

## ***Overview of Plans and Features***

### **Is the contract for a nationwide plan? If not, what are the local areas and what are the long distance rates?**

All of the plans include free long distance for calls initiated from the local calling area. The local calling area includes the state of Mississippi, Mobile and Baldwin counties in Alabama, Pensacola to Seaside, Florida, and Memphis and Jackson, Tennessee. The unlimited plan contains “buckets” of travel minutes. Travel minutes apply if you are outside the local calling area. Travel minutes will also be pooled on the account for any agency. As an example, if there are 100 mobiles on an account, there could be 37,500 travel minutes to be shared. One mobile might use 100 of the travel minutes while another mobile might use 10 and another mobile might use 3,750 travel minutes. For other plans, you can purchase travel minutes in “buckets” of 100 minutes on an as needed basis.

### **If the plan is for local calling areas, what is the roaming rate?**

While the plans are for call initiated in the local calling area, that local calling area includes the entire state of Mississippi as well as Mobile and Baldwin counties in Alabama, Pensacola to Seaside, Florida, and Memphis and Jackson, Tennessee. If travel minutes are included in the selected plan, there is no per minute charge for roaming. If travel minutes are not included, the cost for calls initiated outside the local calling area is \$0.29 per minute.

### **What are the advantages of the Unlimited Plan?**

All calls placed and received within the local calling area are included as unlimited. In addition, all calls placed from the local calling area to any area in the continental United States are included with no applicable long distance charges. The unlimited plan includes pooled travel minutes to cover usage outside the Cellular South local calling area.

### **What are “travel minutes” and how do they impact the rate plan?**

The unlimited plan includes 375 travel minutes per phone on the account. Travel minutes are used when you place calls from outside of the local calling area. These travel minutes are shared by all the mobiles on the agency’s account.

Travel minutes for the other plans are available in “buckets” of 100 minutes. They may be purchased as needed for those who will travel outside the local calling area. These may be pooled if you are using the Pooled Plan.

### **What is the Cellular South per minute charge for minutes over the plan minutes?**

In the Flat Rate (small plan), the charge for minutes over the plan is \$0.07 per minute. The other plans are either unlimited or pooled plans which should not result in any overage if the

appropriate plan or plans are selected. The State Cellular South account team will be glad to work with each agency to ensure that the appropriate plan (or plans) is being purchased.

**What is the cost for voice mail, Caller ID, and other features?**

There is no additional charge for voice mail, Caller ID, message waiting, call waiting, call forwarding, or conference calling.

**Is mobile-to-mobile calling included in the proposed cost? If there are local calling areas, will mobile-to-mobile be limited to common local calling areas?**

The unlimited plan automatically includes mobile-to-mobile coverage in the local calling area, which includes the entire state of Mississippi as well as Mobile and Baldwin counties in Alabama, Pensacola to Seaside, Florida, and Memphis and Jackson, Tennessee. The Pooled plan includes unlimited free mobile-to-mobile from any Cellular South customer within the local calling area to any Cellular South located anywhere. The Flat Rate plan does not include free mobile-to-mobile calling.

**What is the cost of and capabilities of the data cards?**

The initial data card will be provided at no charge. It is currently a Kyocera Passport KPC 680 Data Card or the Franklin CDU 680. The value of the Kyocera card is \$176.00; the value of Franklin Card is \$220.00. The Cellular South CDMA 1X network will produce rates of 40 kb per to 60 kb. The high speed network where available will produce rates of 400 kb to 600 kb. The areas where the high speed network is now available include the following cities and surrounding areas: Tunica, Southaven, Clarksdale, Batesville, Oxford, New Albany, Pontotoc, Tupelo, Starkville, Columbus, West Point, Vicksburg, Jackson Metro Area, Hattiesburg, Laurel, and the Mississippi Gulf Coast. During the 2<sup>nd</sup> quarter of 2009, Cellular South will complete its high speed network in the following counties: Tunica, Coahoma, Quitman, Bolivar, Sunflower, Tallahatchie, Leflore, Humphreys, Washington, Sharkey, Grenada, Yazoo, Jefferson, Adams, Franklin, Lincoln, Amite, Pike, Walthall, Lawrence, and Lauderdale.

According to Kyocera, the Kyocera Passport features an adjustable rotating antenna for maximum signal strength and includes intuitive Passport Navigator software for easy installation and connection management that is compatible with EVDO and CDMA2000 1x services. The card boasts download speeds of up to 2.4 Mbps in EVDO coverage areas and achieves download speeds with bursts of up to 153 kbps on CDMA2000 1x connections outside of EVDO coverage.

The Kyocera Passport 1xEVDO PC Card is 2.13 in. x 4.84 in. x 0.51 in. and weighs 2.01 ounces. The Franklin CDU simply fits into the USB slot of a laptop or PC and is CDMA 1X and EVDO capable.

**What data devices does Cellular South currently have available?**

In addition to the BlackBerry 8830 World Edition, Cellular South offers the Blackberry 8130 Pearl, 8330 Curve, 8230 Pearl Flip, and the HTC 6960 Diamond (Windows-based).

**What is the cost for a BlackBerry that has both voice and data capabilities?**

The BlackBerry 8830 includes voice and data capabilities. The BlackBerry 8830 is included at no charge as part of the data plan for a new subscriber or for an upgrade from a voice only plan

to a voice and data plan. If you require a different model, it will be the agency's responsibility to purchase a different device.

## ***Wireless Communication Technology and Network Coverage***

### **Which type of wireless technology does Cellular South utilize?**

Cellular South utilizes CDMA 1x and EVDO.

### **What is CDMA?**

CDMA (code division multiple access) is a digital cellular technology that uses spread-spectrum techniques. Unlike GSM (global system for mobile communication) that uses TDMA (time division multiple access), CDMA does not assign a specific frequency to each user. Instead, a technology is used to transmit wireless calls by assigning the calls codes. Calls are spread out over the widest range of available channels, taking full advantage of the available spectrum. Individual conversations are encoded with a pseudorandom digital sequence. Codes allow many calls to travel on the same frequency and also guide those calls to the correct receiving phone. It is the common platform on which third generation or 3G technologies are built.

### **Why use CDMA?**

CDMA is the most widely used combined type technology in North America. The CDMA technology affords Cellular South the capability to evolve into and take advantage of the latest technology available without starting over from a hardware perspective. Cellular South finds the technology allows for capacity expansion and growth more effectively and efficiently.

### **What other carriers use CDMA in the United States?**

In addition to Cellular South, CDMA is utilized by Verizon, Alltel, and Sprint/Nextel. There are many other independent carriers who use CDMA.

### **Which carriers use GSM?**

GSM is used by T-Mobile and AT&T (formerly Cingular Wireless).

### **What is different about the Nationwide Cellular South network coverage?**

Cellular South has business relationships with most CDMA carriers in the United States. Through these carrier partnerships the Cellular South Nationwide network has evolved in one of the most robust footprints found in the wireless industry.

### **What are the build out plans to increase voice coverage in Mississippi?**

Cellular South is constantly investing in tower build-out to strengthen their coverage in Mississippi. Currently, Cellular South has 88.1% of the state covered. By the end of 2009 Cellular South is projected to have coverage of 90.1% of the state of Mississippi. Cellular South's current build-out plans will provide coverage to approximately 98% of the state of Mississippi by the end of 2010. All future coverage is tentative and subject to change.

On the web site for the State, you can check coverage for your address as well as check information regarding Cellular South's towers (Tower News).

**Where does Cellular South have data service in the State of Mississippi?**

Wherever there is strong voice coverage in Mississippi you will also have CDMA 1x data coverage. Higher speed EVDO data coverage is available in the following cities and surrounding areas: Tunica, Southaven, Clarksdale, Batesville, Oxford, New Albany, Pontotoc, Tupelo, Starkville, Columbus, West Point, Vicksburg, Jackson Metro Area, Hattiesburg, Laurel, and the Mississippi Gulf Coast. During the 2<sup>nd</sup> quarter of 2009, Cellular South will complete its high speed network in the following counties: Tunica, Coahoma, Quitman, Bolivar, Sunflower, Tallahatchie, Leflore, Humphreys, Washington, Sharkey, Grenada, Yazoo, Jefferson, Adams, Franklin, Lincoln, Amite, Pike, Walthall, Lawrence, and Lauderdale.

**What is EVDO?**

EVDO, also known as EV-DO, 1xEvDO and 1xEV-DO, is a standard for high speed wireless broadband. The acronym is short for "Evolution, Data Only" or "Evolution, Data Optimized". The official name, defined by the Telecommunication Industry Association (TIA) is "CDMA2000, High Rate Packet Data Air Interface". It is one of two major Third Generation, or 3G, wireless standards.

**What are the future data build out plans?**

Wherever there is strong voice coverage in Mississippi you will also have CDMA 1x data coverage. Higher speed EVDO data coverage is available in the following cities and surrounding areas: Tunica, Southaven, Clarksdale, Batesville, Oxford, New Albany, Pontotoc, Tupelo, Starkville, Columbus, West Point, Vicksburg, Jackson Metro Area, Hattiesburg, Laurel, and the Mississippi Gulf Coast. During the 2<sup>nd</sup> quarter of 2009, Cellular South will complete its high speed network in the following counties: Tunica, Coahoma, Quitman, Bolivar, Sunflower, Tallahatchie, Leflore, Humphreys, Washington, Sharkey, Grenada, Yazoo, Jefferson, Adams, Franklin, Lincoln, Amite, Pike, Walthall, Lawrence, and Lauderdale. Nationwide, Cellular South uses its data roaming partners for both 1x and high speed EVDO (refer to [Cellular South's Nationwide Data Coverage Map](#) on the State of Mississippi Wireless Account Management website).

***Use of Master Agreement by Schools, Local Governments, and Other Governing Authorities*****Can K-12 schools, counties, cities, and other governing authorities use the Master Agreement?**

Yes. Any public entity in the state of Mississippi may purchase the cellular services and products included in the Master Agreement. All terms and conditions, products, services, and pricing included in the Master Agreement are available to state agencies, IHLs, community colleges, K-12 schools, local governments, and other governing authorities. The Master Agreement is E-Rate eligible and meets all requirements of ITS and public purchasing statutes.

**As a governing authority, what is required to purchase cellular services and products under the Master Agreement?**

Governing authorities and Cellular South will execute a Supplement to the Master Agreement specifying the initial term and the products and services to be purchased.

**As a governing authority, why do I have to commit to an initial term of service?**

Pricing for products and services in the Master Agreement is based upon the State's commitment to a five-year contract term for state agencies and institutions. Because of the free devices, value-add features, plan pricing, and lack of penalties for service changes, other entities must make a commitment to a time period during which Cellular South will be the "designated provider" of cellular voice and data services and products. The default commitment period for governing authorities is twenty-four months, although Cellular South will work with local governments when term of office is an issue.

**How can I get a copy of the terms and conditions of the Master Agreement?**

Contact the ITS Procurement Help Desk at 601-576-HELP (4357).

## ***E-Rate***

**Is the Master Agreement E-Rate eligible?**

Yes. ITS filed a 470 as required to make this Master Agreement an E-Rate-eligible purchasing instrument.

**I am a school. What if the rates on the new Master Agreement are not better than what I have?**

Schools are not required to use the contract. State agencies and universities are required by law to use the contract.

**If I do want to switch to use the new Master Agreement, can I do an E-Rate SPIN change post-commitment?**

You can prepare and submit a SPIN change letter to change from the vendor previously identified on your 471. There is a form letter for a SPIN change. If you have questions about the SPIN change, contact Gary Rawson with ITS by dialing 601-359-2613 or Patricia Dalton with the Mississippi Department of Education by dialing 601-359-3510.

**If the new contract offers better rates and/or packaging than my school's current contract, how do I change vendors?**

You will need to do a SPIN change letter. See question above for specifics.

## ***Transition from Current Cellular Vendor and Plans***

**What if my current vendor says there is a termination charge to change to the Master Agreement?**

If the wireless service were procured using the ITS Cellular and Pager EPL for cellular service, there are no termination charges. If the wireless service was procured using a different procurement tool, the terms of that contract apply and termination charges may be applicable. Contact the ITS Help Desk at 601-576-HELP (4357) if you have questions or any problem with termination.



**What will happen to the ITS Cellular and Pager EPL?**

The Cellular and Pager EPLs are now expired. For a copy of the archived Cellular or Pager EPL, call the ITS Procurement Help Desk at 601-576-HELP (4357) or send an email to Anthony.hardaway@its.ms.gov.

**How does Cellular South plan to address the equipment conversion from the technology of other wireless companies to CDMA? Who will pay for the equipment? Will Cellular South provide cell phones free for new service (above current cell phone usage)?**

All voice plan subscribers that are not currently on a Cellular South plan will receive, at no charge, a new basic phone at conversion or when new units are added to a plan. The phone (currently a LG 300 or a Kyocera K323 for push to talk) will include, at no additional charge, a battery, a car charger (cigarette lighter adapter), an ear bud (hands free), and a standard power plug. If this phone is lost, stolen or damaged, it will be replaced one time at no additional charge. If an agency requires a phone with additional features, it will be the agency's responsibility to purchase such a phone.

**What is the cost and/or plan for dealing with the fact that Cellular South does not support the BlackBerry devices that an agency currently owns?**

The devices offered by Cellular South meet the CDMA and EVDO technology requirements. Cellular South will provide a BlackBerry 8830 World Edition at no additional cost to each agency user. If this unit is lost, stolen, or damaged it will be the agency's responsibility to purchase a replacement. Each new service plan user will receive a BlackBerry 8830 World Edition at no additional charge. The value of the device is \$399.00.